

Memorandum

6 July 2018

To:	Environment and Community Committee, Local Boards and Independent Māori Statutory Board
Subject:	Cat submissions on the proposed Regional Pest Management Plan
From:	Councillor Penny Hulse – Environment and Community Committee Chair

Purpose

1. This memorandum provides an update on stakeholder engagement in relation to the cat management approach proposed in the Regional Pest Management Plan.

Summary

- *The proposed Regional Pest Management plan introduces the use of micro-chipping to distinguish between owned cats and those that may be managed at high biodiversity value sites to protect native species.*
- *The proposed plan was consulted on in March 2018 alongside the draft Long-term Plan 2018-2028. Through the public consultation process some stakeholders expressed concern at this approach to cat management.*
- *In light of the volume of queries to elected members and misinformation circulating in the community in relation to this issue, a meeting will be held by Councillors Hulse and Casey with stakeholders in September 2018 to discuss the proposed approach to cat management.*
- *The next steps and timeframes for adoption of the Regional Pest Management Plan are outlined in an accompanying memo from staff dated 6 July 2018.*

Context

2. An extensive consultation process on the proposed Regional Pest Management Plan has been undertaken to date, including opportunities for the public to make written submissions on a discussion document in 2015 and formal written submissions on the proposed Regional Pest Management Plan in March 2018.
3. Submitters also had the opportunity to give in person feedback through Have Your Say events aligned with the Long-term Plan consultation in March 2018.
4. Submitters' positions are well-documented across the wide range of topics covered by the proposed Regional Pest Management Plan and the plan is adopted under the Biosecurity Act 1993, which has no requirement for formal hearings.
5. Therefore, the proposed process for finalising the draft plan is to use submissions analysis and workshops with elected members to inform adoption of an operative plan. This process is detailed in an accompanying memo from staff.
6. Stakeholder engagement on cat management issues will be led by councillors, as outlined below.

Discussion

7. The proposed Regional Pest Management Plan introduces the use of micro-chipping to distinguish between owned cats and those that may be managed at high biodiversity value sites to protect native species.
8. Elected members have received a number of queries from members of the community in relation to the cat management approach in the proposed Regional Pest Management Plan, and may be aware of misinformation in the community specifically in relation to this.

9. Councillors Hulse and Casey, supported by staff, will meet with stakeholders in September 2018 to clarify the proposed cat management approach and address any stakeholder concerns.
10. The timing of this meeting in September 2018 will allow for all submissions to the draft Regional Pest Management Plan on this issue to be coded, summarised and available as supporting information for the meeting.

Next steps

11. Staff will liaise with representative stakeholders to set up the proposed meeting in September 2018.
12. The process and timeframes for adoption of the Regional Pest Management Plan are outlined in the accompanying memo from staff.
13. Adoption of the operative Regional Pest Management Plan is expected to be in March 2019.
14. If you have any questions about the information in this memo please contact Mara Bebich, Stakeholder Manager on 021 020 11736 or mara.bebich@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz